

Observation 5: Lydia - creative.

27th July 2002 10:45

2nd session - choosing

Aim

To observe Lydia during a “choosing” session. I will try to observe her development levels and record how she interacts with other children and the adults around her.

Setting

The primary school, in which I am working, is situated on a campus with a sports centre, a community school and a 6th form college. It has 6 junior classes and 3 infant classes. There is a classroom assistant and a teacher for each class. On Thursday and Friday there are 2 students working in the infants. There are a various number of parent helpers visiting on different days of the week. Lydia is 6 years 11mths old and is in yr. 2. She has just completed her SATS. She is in the 1st (higher) set for maths and in the 2nd (middle) set for literacy. She has many friends and enjoys school, learning new things. Lydia has 3 friends who she usually plays with and works with in class. They are all girls and all in year 2. Hannah, Shannell Erica and Lydia always do the same activity even if they don't all agree. English is Shannell's second language and she sometimes has trouble with the language barrier between the girls in the group. I will observe Lydia on the 27th of July 2002 for 45mins during a creative choosing session. There are several activities set up in the class rooms and the children may choose which activity they wish to participate in. Some of these activities include painting, drawing, junk models and collage work.

Observation

I will make notes during my observation, then copy it up into a written report.

Lydia heads straight for the art table at the far end of the classroom where a painting session has been set up. Her and many of the yr2 girls start collecting sheets of paper. Lydia, Hannah, Erica and Shannell ask me what they can paint as I sit down at the end of the table. I suggest that they draw each other. So the girls pair up. Hannah and Lydia start to paint Shannell and Erica. Lydia looks closely at Erica's features and tries to copy down all the details. She notes the freckles, the dimples the small earrings and the way her hair is put up. She misjudges the size of Erica's nose and as a consequence the picture looks out of place. She mixes up the colour to fill in for Erica's skin tone. Erica sits slightly impatiently fidgeting. Lydia still concentrates on the painting and ignores Erica impatience and continues to concentrate hard on the colour mixing.

I ask her some questions.

“Lydia, what colours make green?”

“That’s easy, you just mix blue with yellow. But you have to put yellow in first ‘cause blue is darker and you have to put loads of yellow in to make it a lighter colour.”

“Ok, how about purple?”

“Oh Miss Carr, that is well easy, don’t you know?”

“I’m just seeing if you do, so that if you don’t know I can teach you.”

“Oh, -thinks hard- ok. It’s blue and red. Isn’t it?”

“Yes well done, How about brown?”

“Yellow, blue and red!”

“Well that’s ok then, let’s see if you can remember tomorrow, or maybe next week.”

“Ask me another one!”

“Ok, how do you mix pink?”

“Er...red...”

“Yes that’s a good start.”

-Lydia thinks hard- “and white?”

“What does red and white make? Shall we have a look?”

Lydia reaches for the red and the white paint, in the process she knocks over Hannah’s water pot.

“Oh Lydia! You’re so clumsy!”

“I’m sorry Hannah; I didn’t mean it I really didn’t.”

Lydia and Hannah both help to clean up the mess. Hannah asks Erica to help to clean up, and Shannell also helps when she realises what has happened.

After we’ve cleaned up the mess Lydia mixes a little red into a pot with white paint in.

“Pink!”

“Well done now see if you can make the colour of Erica’s skin.”

Lydia concentrates on her colours, she adds a little yellow to her pink then adds a bit more red. She tests a bit then starts to paint on her picture. She adds small brown dots for freckles.

“Err... looks kinda icky.”

“What’s icky?”

“Yucky, gross you know, it looks like someone has been sick all over her face!”

Hannah and Shannell start to laugh and Lydia smiles but they stop when they realises that Erica doesn’t particularly like the idea of having a face which looks like someone’s been sick on.

For a few seconds Erica looks closely at the picture. After a little pause she starts to giggle too. Everyone else joins in.

“It’s only the picture Erica; your face doesn’t look like someone’s been sick. It’s a very good effort Lydia. Well done. And you too Hannah, are we going to finish after break?”

They reply in a chorus of

“Yeah!”

Ok then girls take of your aprons, wash your hands and wash your paintbrushes. We’ll finish straight after break.

Learning for me

I learnt a lot from with class 1 / 2 K and this was a typical session. Everyone in the class has different view on things and even though there are definite social groups everyone is friends with everyone else. The teachers and other staff need to practice anti-discriminatory and anti-bias practice. It is important to portray equal opportunities.

Children are to be treated equally but at the same time their personal needs must be taken into consideration. In class 1 / 2 K there are friends who are in definite social groups then there are groups that inter-change and mix with the whole of the infant's school. This observation points out how the girls work together to get the tasks completed. They all work together to form a good team. It is a clear that the team works well; they all have roles to play. There's the team leader Hannah, the quick thinker Erica and the "do-er" Lydia who always works hard to complete necessary tasks. Shannell is a hard worker and tries to fit in even if she doesn't always understand.

I learnt to set up and clear away activities with the children's help, how to encourage exploration of colour and creativity. I managed to gain the children's confidence and by helping them to reach their full potential.

All four girls developed their fine motor skills and creativity in this exercise. They practice painting techniques and different colours and styles. They learned how to co-operate and communicate with each other. They learn to trust opinions of the adults they work with, they learn to respect their knowledge and experience. I think that in the future the children could be put into groups to help them to mix into different social groups and form new relationships. Lydia could have, in the future, extra help during task's which involve thinking though complicated theories, and she has trouble understanding some complicated concepts.

Evaluation

Children that are 7 years old should be able to explore and express ideas in colour, shape, form and space experiment. They use a variety of materials, tools and techniques, comment on differences in others' work, and suggest ways of improving their own work. All of these things a 7 year old child should be able to do in art, design and creativity. This is identified by Katherine Dilasion. (The ages and stages of children, 2001) Of course all children are different and some develop faster/slower than others so this needs to be taken into consideration when teaching or just observing a child. Although Lydia is not yet 7 she can express her own ideas and style using colour and shape, she can use many different tools that are presented to her and using individual techniques Lydia can bring out the best in her work.

Children need to do activities that suit their age and stage of development. It is important to get the age and stage right for the children you are working with, activities that are too hard will be discouraging and the child will feel as if they are failing. Children can learn from new activities and experiences that are interesting and a little bit challenging.

I feel that I accomplished my aim, I observed Lydia while she completed her task, I recorded her development and observed her knowledge and creative / fine motor skills. She has good hand eye co-ordination that enables her to control her hand movements. Lydia has strong determination and as a consequence she always does her best.

In this observation I discovered that Lydia has a good knowledge and understanding of what goes on around her, she has good common sense and is good at problem solving. She is at the correct development levels for the average 7 yr. old which is good, as she is not yet 7. Lydia is in the concrete operational stage which means she is beyond the other 6 year olds in her class, who are in the pre-operational stage.

In his stages of development Piaget states that children of the concrete operational stage can think in a logical way but their thinking depends upon concrete sources. Lydia does this in most of the activities and tasks that she has to face. She thinks for herself if given the correct encouragement, if she has things explained to her in detail she finds it easy to understand.

Bibliography

Piaget, J. (1929). *The Child's Conception of the World*. NY: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich.
Tassoni, P (2000). *Diploma in Child Care and Education*. Oxford, Heinemann's